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Washington Whispers

Now shaping up, according to White House insiders: A collision between the two most powerful members of the Reagan team, Secretary of State Alexander Haig and presidential counselor Edwin Meese. The issue is Haig's attempt to extend his power beyond international affairs to include intelligence and national-security matters—a move that Meese fears would disrupt the orderly system of command he has created.

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Bobby Inman, the highly regarded espionage expert taking over as No. 2 man at the Central Intelligence Agency, tells associates that his first goal is to build up intelligence manpower. The U.S. is great, he says, at using highly sophisticated devices to track adversaries' military equipment—but poor at forecasting where political-military events are headed.